



NY's Responsible Play Partnership Recognizes National Problem Gambling Awareness Month

Highlights include a presentation by acclaimed criminal justice researcher on voluntary self-exclusion best practices

New York's Responsible Play Partnership (RPP) – consisting of the New York State Gaming Commission (Commission), the New York State Office on Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) and the New York Council on Problem Gambling – today announced a series of initiatives in recognition of National Problem Gambling Awareness Month in March.

The Commission, which last year launched what has been called “the broadest voluntary self-exclusion (VSE) program in the nation” by the National Council on Problem Gambling recently completed the last in a series of training sessions for Lottery, video Lottery and commercial casino employees involved in the VSE intake process. The RPP introduced its statewide VSE database in February of 2017 to allow individuals who self-identify as needing help in their battle with problem gambling to ban themselves from all forms of gambling licensed by the Gaming Commission. To date, more than 1,000 individuals from New York and elsewhere have opted to take advantage of the break in gambling activity the VSE program affords them.

The Commission will host a presentation featuring Dr. Amanda McCormick who serves as Interim Director of British Columbia's School of Criminology and Criminal Justice, Associate Professor at the University of the Fraser Valley, and Research Associate with the Centre for Public Safety and Criminal Justice Research. Dr. McCormick will share results of her research on the British Columbia Lottery Corporation's voluntary self-exclusion program from the perspective of program participants.

“The Responsible Play Partnership remains true to its mission of educating New Yorkers on the issue of problem gambling and the availability of prevention and treatment resources close to home,” said New York State Gaming Commission Acting Executive Director Ronald Ochrym. “We are pleased to be able to bring the important messages of National Problem Gambling Awareness Month to all our licensed properties – large and small.”

OASAS Commissioner Arlene González-Sánchez said, “New York State is dedicated to providing quality services for anyone dealing with the effects of a gambling addiction. These initiatives will help us further raise awareness of problem gambling resources across the state, reach more people in need, and get them help to rebuild their lives.”

New York Council on Problem Gambling Executive Director James Maney said, “The work being done through this partnership brings together prevention, treatment, policy change and enforcement and the Council is pleased to continue working with NYS OASAS and the NYS Gaming Commission to address problem gambling across the spectrum”

New York State’s specific plans for National Problem Gambling Awareness Month include the following:

- The RPP will introduce the fourth in a series of public service announcements aimed at increasing awareness of the State’s addictions referral HOPELINE administered by OASAS. The new PSA showcases the HOPELINE’s Text option (HOPENY 467369) in an effort to reach a younger demographic that may be seeking a more anonymous way to reach out for help. The 30-second PSA, available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#), will run on TV and radio statewide throughout National Problem Gambling Awareness Month.
- The Commission is finalizing plans to extend the state’s self-exclusion program to include traditional Lottery and the Lottery subscription program.
- RPP representatives will continue their review of the original Problem Gambling/Responsible Gaming (PG/RG) plans submitted by commercial casino operators to help these properties meet their goals and expand their PG/RG programs.
- Messaging and signage promoting National Problem Gambling Awareness Month and the HOPELINE will be displayed at all licensed gaming facilities, including 17,000 Lottery retailers across the State.
- The RPP members (@NYSGamingComm, @NYSOASAS and @NYProbGambling) will coordinate a focused social media campaign to promote awareness of problem gambling.
- And, as it has since its inception in 2013, the RPP will continue to work with gaming operators, players, and the problem gambling prevention and treatment communities beyond March, educating the public about the warning signs of problem gambling and raising awareness about the help that is available close to home.

About the Responsible Play Partnership

The RPP was formed in February 2013 to address collaboratively problem gambling in New York State. Since then, the RPP has undertaken a series of initiatives, including the State’s first-ever public forum featuring experts and stakeholders from around the world discussing best practices and policies in the era of expanded gaming. To learn more about the RPP’s work, visit [here](#).

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